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UNCLAS WELLINGTON 000549

SIPDIS

FSINFATC FOR SPAS/POL - BILL INGRAM AND HAITHAM AL-MUSSAWI  
DEPT FOR EAP/ANP - THOMAS RAMSEY

E.O. 12985: N/A

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SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND NOMINATION FOR FSN POLITICAL  
TRAINING COURSE, SEPTEMBER 26 - OCTOBER 7

REF: STATE 115052

1. Embassy Wellington submits the following nomination for the FSN Staff Political Training Course to be held in Washington from September 26 - October 7, 2005.

2. Name: Craig Brian Greaves

Grade: 9 Step 2.

Length of Service: Start date - May 16, 2005.

English language ability: level 4 (native speaker).

Time spent in the U.S.:

November 1998: Washington DC. Purpose: Brief period before travelling to Bosnia to work for a DC-based research and polling firm (Greenberg Research Inc).

December 1998 - March 1999: Washington DC. Purpose: Internship with DC Legislative and Regulatory Services.

February 2000: San Francisco. Purpose: One week personal vacation.

Previous training in the U.S.: None.

Previous nomination for political training course: No.

3. Narrative: Although Craig Greaves has been at Embassy Wellington for just a short time, after being recruited directly from the New Zealand Parliament, he has already become invaluable to us. We foresee a great future here for years to come.

Our post is small, and just graduated from SEP post status, which has significantly increased our reporting load. Most of the work falls on the three-officer Pol-Econ Section, and virtually all political reporting is currently done by the Pol-Econ Counselor and the entry-level, first-time Poloff. Recognizing the shortage, an FTE was approved for a new mid-level officer for the section, but the bureau does not have the funds to fill the slot. It will be at least two years before the funds are allocated.

In addition to this, there is no predecessor's work for Craig to draw on, as he is the first Embassy Wellington LES to perform this extensive reporting role. Further, no Wellington LES has ever taken this training course. Therefore, Post considers it is imperative that Craig be selected for this course at this time. The timing is particularly optimal as it will immediately precede the formation of the new Parliament and it will advance Craig's ability to counsel and support the new Ambassador.

New Zealand - U.S. relations are good overall but we differ on many issues of concern to the United States. Already Craig has proved invaluable in providing access to leading decision makers both inside and outside of the political community.

The training course would provide him with the necessary complementary skills and background knowledge needed to clarify USG positions in an effort to influence key players throughout New Zealand as well as presenting essential insights in understanding how Washington operates and what USG policymakers need.

Craig is skilled enough to perform many of the functions of a reporting officer; he brings with him an array of skills, contacts and knowledge that improves the Mission's understanding and interpretation of the domestic political environment. Craig is also hard working, a fast study, and unfailingly considerate, and we think he'd be a great asset to the class.

The Ambassador and the DCM strongly support his nomination and firmly believe Craig's immediate participation in this course will significantly advance the Mission's objectives.

Swindells